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December 31, 2000

3332 '01 JAN -8 P12:15

Dockets Management Branch
Food and Drug Administration
Room 1061
5630 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

To whom it may concern:

A very important issue has been brought to my attention because of a science fair experiment I did for school. The experiment was about the effects caffeine has on planaria. The caffeine killed each of the planaria.

Not only did the caffeine kill the planaria, but also a twenty-year-old college student in North Carolina died from a caffeine overdose. Caffeine is found both naturally and artificially in many foods, and despite this and its dangerous effects, caffeine is not listed on the nutrition facts of foods or drinks. Therefore I petition that all companies should be required to indicate the amount of caffeine in milligrams per serving on the nutrition facts just as the number of calories is listed.

Many people take caffeine to increase their energy or to enable them to remain awake. Many people drink one or several cups of coffee each morning resulting from an acquired caffeine addiction. Caffeine has the same affects on the brain as cocaine, amphetamines, and heroine. However, the affects are not as drastic. When caffeine is released in the bloodstream, adrenaline is also released, resulting in an increased heart rate, dilated pupils, tightened muscles, accelerated heart rate, slowed blood flow, and a triggered release of sugar into the blood by the liver which allows for extra energy. Shortly after, when the caffeine has lost its affect, the victim becomes depressed, is fatigued, and suffers from throbbing headaches, irritability, insomnia, and disorientation. So, the victim may be forced to continue taking the caffeine source to avoid the effects of long- term withdrawal, which include drowsiness, headaches, irritability, nausea, vomiting, and depression.

It takes twelve hours for 200mg of caffeine to wear-off. Two hundred milligrams could be merely two six-ounce cups of coffee. As a result, the victim would not be able to sleep. How was the victim to know that drinking those two cups of coffee at lunch would prevent him/her from sleeping eight hours later? Furthermore, how was the victim to know how much caffeine was in the coffee? Regardless, more than half of America's adults consume more than 300mg of caffeine per day and some as much as a gram. Worldwide, caffeine is the most popular drug. Perhaps it is also the drug people know the least about. Surely if people knew they wouldn't continue to harm their bodies as severely with this dangerous and addictive drug that increases the risk for heart disease, high-blood pressure, and other health problems, not to mention death. By putting the amount of caffeine on the labels, consumers will be able to regulate their consumption and act accordingly.

Thank you for you time and consideration to my request.

Sincerely,

Sonya L. Bearden

Sonya A. Bearden

Beaumont School c/o '03

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